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NEWS ANALYSIS SERVICE

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DEFENSE COMPUTERS 470

BY DONALD W. ROTHBERG

ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP) - DEFENSE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS SAID TODAY THAT THEY HAVE FOUND NO EVIDENCE THAT MILITARY INTELLIGENCE HAS RETAINED COMPUTERIZED FILES ON CIVILIANS OR THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS CREATED A VAST ELECTRONIC NETWORK CONTAINING INFORMATION ON MILLIONS OF AMERICANS.

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"WE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ARE NOT IN AND DO NOT INTEND TO GET INTO THE BUSINESS OF SURVEILLING AMERICAN CITIZENS WHO HAVE NO AFFILIATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT," D. O. COOKE, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR ADMINISTRATION, TOLD A JOINT SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING.

COOKE WAS RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS THAT MILITARY INTELLIGENCE HAD RETAINED CIVIL DISTURBANCE FILES ORDERED DESTROYED IN 1970 AND 1971 AND THAT THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT WAS A KEY PARTICIPANT IN A PROJECT DESIGNED TO INTERCONNECT GOVERNMENT DATA BANKS.

ON JUNE 13, THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT SENT A MEMORANDUM TO CONGRESS SAYING THAT IT HAD FOUND 9,200 DOCUMENTS IN ITS FILES ON THE ACTIVITIES OF AMERICAN CITIZENS MORE THAN FOUR YEARS AFTER THE RECORDS WERE SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN DESTROYED.

THE STATEMENT SAID ACTION WAS BEING TAKEN TO ELIMINATE THE FILES AND INDICATED THEIR CONTINUED PRESENCE HAD BEEN AN OVERSIGHT.

DESPITE COOKE'S DENIAL, SEN. JOHN V. TUNNEY, D-CALIF., SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN, QUESTIONED WHETHER VARIOUS GOVERNMENT AGENCIES INCLUDING THE WHITE HOUSE, COULD TAP INTO DATA BANKS WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE OPERATING AGENCY.

Comment.

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These comments represent the initial and tentative reaction of the CIA Operations Center and of the appropriate analytic component in the Agency to the attached item from the news wire services.

COOKE SAID IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO TAP INTO THE CLASSIFIED COMPUTERS SYSTEMS OPERATED BY THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT.

THE DEPARTMENT DOES OPERATE AN UNCLASSIFIED SYSTEM CALLED ARTANET, WHICH COOKE SAID IS USED AS A RESEARCH TOOL BY VARIOUS UNIVERSITIES. "WE ARE AT A LOSS TO IMAGINE WHY ANYONE WOULD TRY TO HIDE OUTDATED DATA ON CIVIL DISTURBANCES OVER FIVE YEARS OLD IN AN UNCLASSIFIED COMPUTER NETWORK WIDELY AVAILABLE TO SUBSCRIBERS IN THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY," COOKE SAID.

COOKE SAID A PENTAGON DATA BANK CALLED THE DEFENSE CENTRAL INDEX OF INVESTIGATIONS IS COMPUTERIZED TO SEARCH A FILE WHICH EXISTS WITHIN THE MILITARY AND CONTAINS THE NAME, DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH, FILE NUMBER AND LOCATION OF THAT FILE ON 15 MILLION INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE COME UNDER INVESTIGATION BY THE MILITARY DURING THE PAST 15 YEARS.

COOKE SAID THE DCII "IS MOST USEFUL NOW IN LOCATING THE FILES OF INDIVIDUALS WHO REQUEST ACCESS TO THEIR RECORDS UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT."

TUNNEY, WHO DESCRIBED THE SESSION AS THE OPENING OF A LONG SERIES OF HEARINGS ON SURVEILLANCE TECHNOLOGY, ASKED COOKE ABOUT A NUMBER OF SYSTEMS INCLUDING ONE CALLED PROJECT ZENITH, UNDER WHICH HE SAID THE WHITE HOUSE AT ONE TIME PLANNED TO CENTRALIZE SENSITIVE FILES FROM DOMESTIC AGENCIES.

COOKE SAID HE KNEW NOTHING ABOUT IT EXCEPT IT WAS NOT TIED INTO PENTAGON SYSTEMS.

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7DEFENSE COMPUTERS ADD 150

7WASHINGTON DEFENSE COMPUTERS A109 ADD: SYSTEMS.

WHAT ABOUT A SYSTEM CALLED HARVEST? TUNNEY ASKED.

COOKE DESCRIBED IT AS A NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY; AND WHEN TUNNEY ASKED IF IT CONTAINED INFORMATION ON AMERICAN CITIZENS; COOKE SAID HE WOULD PREFER NOT DISCUSSING THE SYSTEM IN OPEN SESSION.

WHEN TUNNEY SAID HE DIDN'T THINK HIS QUESTION WOULD VIOLATE A SECURITY; COOKE REPLIED THAT HE DIDN'T KNOW WHETHER THE SYSTEM CONTAINED INFORMATION ON AMERICANS.

"YOU DON'T KNOW OR YOU WON'T TELL?" TUNNEY ASKED.

"I DON'T KNOW," SAID COOKE.

WHAT ABOUT A SYSTEM CALLED BEOLAM? THE SENATOR ASKED.

COOKE LAUGHED AND REPLIED HE HAD NOT HEARD THE WORD USED IN AN OFFICIAL SENSE."

THEN IN WHAT SENSE ASKED TUNNEY.

"ONLY IN REFERENCE TO THE PARLIAMENTARY INSTITUTION IN LONDON," REPLIED COOKE.

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Comment. Adds to referent item.